

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 HONG K 02290 060315Z

62

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 CU-02 SAJ-01 SAM-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

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FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4036

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

DIA WASHDC

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 2290

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: XGDS1

TAGS: PFOR CH IN

SUBJ: SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS

REF: A) HK 2179 B) HK 1731 C) NEW DELHI 2771

SUMMARY

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 HONG K 02290 060315Z

CONTINUING THEIR TWO TRACK APPROACH TO INDIAN COUNTERPARTS IN

IN HONG KONG , LOCAL PRC CADRE HAVE INDICATED THAT PEKING IS DISAPPOINTED WITH INDIA'S LATEST MOVE IN KASHMIR AND WITH THE LACK OF DELHI'S RESPONSE TO PRC INITIATIVES. NEVERTHELESS THE CHINESE ARE MAKING PLAIN THAT THE CURRENT RAPPROACHMENT EFFORT IS STILL VERY MUCH ON THE RAILS AND ONE CONTACT IN FACT HAS IMPLIED THAT THE RESUMPTION OF SINO-INDIAN AMBASSADORIAL TIES IS BEING WORKED ON AT HIGH LEVELS. PRC MEDIA COVERAGE OF KASHMIR TO DATE MEANWHILE TEND TO CONFIRM THAT PEKING IS GIVING THIS ISSUE RELATIVELY LOW KEY TREATMENT.
END SUMMARY

1. HONG KONG BASEC CADRE ARE CONTINUING THEIR TWO TRACK APPROACH TO PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL INDIANS (REF A). ON THE FEB 27 EVE OF A GENERAL PAKISTAN STRIKE TO PROTEST MRS. GANDHI AND SHEIKH ABDULLAH'S ACCORD ON KASHMIR, A SENIOR PRC NCNA OFFICIAL, DEPUTY DIRECTOR LI CHU-SHENG DURING A PAKISTAN CONGEN RECEPTION SOUTH OUT INDIAN EXPRESS CORRESPONDENT B.K. TIWARI TO DISCUSS SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS. TIWARI SUBSEQUENTLY INFORMED U.S. CONGENOFF THAT LI HAS STRESSED CHINESE DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE LATEST KASHMIR DEVELOPMENT AND WITH THE LACK OF INDIAN RESPONSE TO RECENT PRC OVERTURES. LI TOLD TIWARI THAT "WE HAVE TAKEN SEVERAL INITITATIVES AND WE HAVE NOTED THAT YOU HAVEN'T TAKEN ANY INITIATIVE AT ALL. WHAT MORE DO YOU WANT US TO DO? YOU MUST HAVE READ BY NOW VICE PREMIER CHEN HSI-LIEN'S STATEMENTTHAT THE INTITATIVE IS NOW IN YOUR HANDS". TIWARI REPLIED THAT AS HE WAS NOT A GOI OFFICIAL HE DID NOT HAVE THE ANSWERS.

2. TURNING TO KASHMIR, LI ASKED WHY INDIA HAS MADE ITS LATEST MOVE, DECLARING THAT DELHI HAS NOW GONE BACK ON ITS WORD ON THIS ISSUE AND THAT THIS WAS NOT A GODD SIGN. TIWARI RESPONDED THT ABDULLAH'S APPOINTMENT AS CHIEF MINISTER APPLIED ONLY TO INDIAN CONTROLLED PORTION AND THE MATTER WAS THUS AN ENTIRELY INTERNAL INDIAN MATTER. THERE HAD BEEN REALLY NO CHANGE IN THE STATUS QUO AND PAKISTAN HAD LOST NOTHING. ASKED IF NCNA WOULD BE COMMENTING ON KASHMIR, LI REPLIED THIS WAS A DECISION FOR PEKING BUT REPEATED THAT KASHMIR DEVELOPMENT WAS NOT A GOOD SIGN.

3. ON THE OFFICIAL SIDE OBLIQUE CHINESE HINTS OF DISPLEASURE OVER KASHMIR WERE PASSED ON FEB 26-27 TO INDIAN COMMISSION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 HONG K 02290 060315Z

ALSO. HOWEVER, ON FEB 28 WHEN FIRST SECRETARY CHANDROAN WAS CONTACTED BY LAI SHU-TONG, FOEREIGN NEWS EDITOR OF THE PRC OWNED WEN WEI PO, THE CHINESE MESSAGE WAS OBVIOUSLY MORE UPBEAT. CHANDRAN TOLD US CONGENOFF ON MARCH 3 THAT WHEN CHADRAN ASKED LAI ABOUT KASKMIR, LAI STRESSED TWICE THAT VICE PREMIER CHEN'S REMARKS HAD BEEN MADE AFTER THE KASHMIR ACCORD WAS ANNOUNCED, CLEARLY IMPLYING THE ISSUE HAD ALREADY PEAKED. IN THE CONTEXT OF DESCRIBING THE IMPORTANCE TO ALL THE SUBCONTIENT OF KEEPING

OUT "SUPERPOWER HEGEMONIC DOMINATION", LAI MADE POINT THAT FULL IMPROVEMENT OF SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS WAS DEPENDENT UPON NORMALIZATION OF PAKISTAN-INDIAN RELATIONS. HE DID NOT DEMUR WITH CHANDRAN'S REMARK THAT SUCH PAK-INDIAN NORMALIZATION WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME.

4. RESPONDING TO CHANDRAN'S OBSERVATION THAT PRESENT INTERPLAY OF SINO-INDIAN APPROACHES AND DISCUSSIONS WAS CONFUSING AND THAT IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SEE WHERE DEVELOPMENTS WERE LEADING, LAI SAID THAT SINO-INDIAN AMBASSADORIAL TIES WOULD BE RESUMED AND THAT THEREAFTER EACH ISSUE AND POINT FOR DISCUSSION COULD BE HANDLED MORE SPECIFICALLY. CHANDRAN TOLD CONGENOFF THAT SINCE LAI STATED THIS LATTER POINT IN SUCH DIRECT TERMS, HE COULD ONLY ASSUME LAI HAS INFORMATION THIS IS BEING WORKED ON AT HIGHER LEVELS. CHANDRAN DISCLAIMED HAVING RECEIVED ANY SUCH CONFIRMATION AS YET FROM DELHI HIMSELF BUT SAID HE HAD REPORTED CONVERSATION TO MEA. CHANDRAN CONSIDERED IT IMPORTANT THAT WHILE NCNA HAD CARRIED MODERATEDLY CRITICAL "REFERENCE MATERIALS" RE KASHMIR IN ITS DOMESTIC SERVICE, THERE HAD BEEN NO SUCH ITEMS IN NCNA'S INTERNATIONAL SERVICE. HE SAID THIS IS A GOOD INDICATION THE CHINESE WOULD NOT PLAY ISSUE UP FURTHER. COMMENT: THE LOCAL ANOMALY OF OFFICIAL PRC PERSONNEL CONTACTING PRIVATE INDIANS AND PRC AFFILIATED CADRE CONTACTING OFFICIAL INDIANS CONTINUES, APPARENTLY TO KEEP THESE CONTACTS TECHNICALLY UNOFFICIAL. THIS MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO ASSESS THE RELATIVE AUTHORITATIVENESS OF THESE CHANNELS, ESPECIALLY AS PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL INDIANS BOTH AS THAT THEIR CONVERSATIONS WITH CONGENOFFS BE KEPT PRIVILEGED FROM THE OTHER (REF B). WE NOTE THAT LAI'S STATEMENT INFERRING THAT RESUMPTION OF AMBASSADORIAL TIES IS BEING WORKED ON AT HIGHER LEVELS WOULD SEEM SOMEWHAT AT VARIANCE WITH LAI'S COMPLAINT ABOUT THE LACK OF INDIAN RESPONSIVENESS THUS FAR. ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION IS THAT IN HIS EFFORT TO ASSURE CHANDRAN THAT KASHMIR IS NOT A CRITICAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 HONG K 02290 060315Z

ISSUE, LAI HAS OVERSTATED THE CASE. AT ANY RATE, REVIEW OF PRC CURRENT MEDIA COVERAGE ON KASHMIR CONFIRMS CHANDRAN'S VIEW THAT PEKING SEEMS TO BE PULLING IT SPUNCHES ON THIS ISSUE. NCNA TREATMENT TO DATE HAS CONSISTED MAINLY OF REPLAYING PAKISTAN AND THIRD COUNTRY CRITICISM OF THE GANDHI-ABDULLAH ACCORD. SIGNIFICANTLY, A PEOPLE'S DAILY COMMENTARY OF MARCH 3 IS RELATIVELY LOW KEY AND NCNA CARRIED ONLY EXCERPTS OF THIS PIECE. CROSS

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